



INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT 2015 – 16
HYDEBANK WOOD COLLEGE

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance the quality of prison life, by working to ensure fairness and accountability in prison.

Statement of Purpose

Members of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) Hydebank Wood College (HBW) were appointed by the Justice Minister under Section 3 of the Treatment of Offenders Act (NI) 1968 and under the Prison Act (NI) 1953.

The Board is required to:

- visit HBW regularly and report to the Justice Minister on the conditions of imprisonment and the treatment of offenders;
- consider requests and complaints made by prisoners to the Board;
- report matters of concern to the Governor or, in serious cases, the Justice Minister;
- exercise certain powers that are given to the Prison and Young Offenders Rules (NI) 2005.

The Prison Rules further require the Board to satisfy itself as to:

- the treatment of prisoners including provision for their healthcare and other welfare while in prison;
- the facilities available to prisoners to allow them to make purposeful use of their time;
- the cleanliness and adequacy of prison premises.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have free access at any time to all prisoners and to all parts of the prison to which they are appointed. The Board shall also have reasonable access to any of the records of the prison, with the exception of medical records.

UK NATIONAL PREVENTATIVE MECHANISM

The Independent Monitoring Board is part of the United Kingdom National Preventative Mechanism (UK NPM) as required by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

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CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Independent Monitoring Board (The Board/IMB) for the Young Offenders Centre (YOC) and Hydebank Wood Prison (HBW) for the period 1 April 2015 - 31 March 2016. Since early April 2015 the two establishments are now known as Hydebank Wood College (HBW).

The Board is made up from volunteers from all walks of life, who visit the prison and prisoners on a regular basis, to monitor the treatment and well-being of prisoners and the conditions in which they are being held. The Board also keeps a close eye on the cleanliness and adequacy of the prison premises. We also try to ensure that prisoners are encouraged to make purposeful use of their time i.e. attending education classes, have use of the library, look after the gardens, work in the kitchen – any area of work which can lead to accreditation, and various other activities.

I am most grateful to my colleagues on the Board for their unwavering support and their unstinting work and commitment to the IMB. It is very time-consuming but is also very rewarding. I am very grateful to them all for the support they have shown me in my role as Chair over the past year. Thank you one and all.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer a big thank you to the many HBW staff members for their co-operation and willingness to assist, and spend time with the Board members as they carry out their duties.

I wish to thank the Governors for their courtesy and co-operation, both with their presence at our monthly Board meetings and when we carry out our duties around the prison.

Finally, we are as always, very grateful to the staff in the IMB Secretariat for their never-ending support. They are always more than willing to help and give us as much assistance and expertise as they can. Without their support, the role of Chair would be a very difficult one to fulfil.

Dennis Constable
Chairperson

OVERVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT

(Note for the reader: male young offenders are housed in the YOC and all females are housed in Ash House).

Young Offenders Centre (YOC) and Hydebank Wood Prison, now College (HBW) is in itself a unique establishment in that it is effectively two separate prisons on one site. It accommodates young male offenders (aged 17 - 21 years) both remand and sentenced and serving four years or less. On occasion some males may remain there to serve out their sentence until the day before their 24th birthday. The YOC stopped housing juveniles in 2012. They are now housed at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, which is more suited and appropriate environment for younger prisoners.

Since 2004, Ash House in HBW has also been the women's prison for Northern Ireland. All female prisoners - remand and sentenced - serving a wide range of sentences of up to and including life, are housed in this unit. Ash House is a stand-alone residential unit adjacent to the male accommodation. It has five self contained landings each with dining, association areas and communal toilet/shower facilities. All cells have integral sanitation facilities. The long awaited highly held view is that a designated, stand-alone prison will be made available in the future. There is no doubt that the women lose out on activities and have more restricted movement, because they are sharing a site with young offenders. The new unit for six females, Murray House has now been completed and is sited close to the entrance to HBW, away from the main site. This will house females that are nearing the end of their sentence, as well as those who are working out at various locations.

The majority of prisoners are accommodated in five residential houses; Ash, Beech, Cedar, Elm and Willow. There is a separate Care and Supervision Unit (CSU) and a Healthcare Centre. Healthcare has lost some of its floor space, as part of it is now designated to accommodate separated female prisoners. IMB have a sound relationship with the Healthcare Unit staff, who will gladly advise us on any issue regarding prisoners' well-being.

Healthcare for all prisoners is provided by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (The Trust). The drug and alcohol service for prisoners, who are in need of consultation, is provided by Ad:ept (Alcohol and Drugs. Empowering People through

Therapy) in partnership with the Trust and the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS).

As of 13 April 2015 Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) has now resumed responsibility for education and training at HBW. **HBW is now known as Hydebank Wood College and the prisoners are referred to as students, with the focus on building a safer community through learning and skills.**

Various charitable and voluntary organisations maintain a visible presence on the site.

- NIACRO provide excellent guidance through the Jobtrack scheme for students trying to access employment upon release from HBW. NIACRO, also run the visitor's centre where they provide refreshments to visitors and students alike. They also provide an excellent play area for children visiting which is supervised by NIACRO staff. This service is invaluable and NIACRO staff and volunteers are a very dedicated team.
- CRUSE Bereavement Care provides support in dealing with bereavement issues.
- Barnardo's support students with family issues.
- Housing Rights Services staff brief students on the complexities of obtaining housing, housing benefits and associated grants.

Spiritual and religious matters are the remit of the prison Chaplaincy Team who work very hard to facilitate the practice of all faiths within the student community, and provide excellent and never-ending support to students and their families alike. This is a very important service which is highly praised by all, i.e. HBW staff, voluntary services, IMB and students alike.

An innovative idea has been the opening of "The Barn." This involved the refurbishment of an old building into a suitable venue, to sell handicrafts and other items of a various nature made by the students. "The Barn" is sited adjacent to the visitors' car park and visitors and the general public have access to it during normal shopping hours. In addition to the HBW staff who work there, the venue is also staffed mainly by students who were involved in the production of the goods being sold.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board recommends that:

1. ACCOMMODATION – Males

- a) Every effort is made to ensure that these facilities currently in Willow 1 are retained and fully utilised. (para 1.6)
- b) Wherever possible such actions as doubling up in cells should be used sparingly and used only on a case by case basis. (para 1.7)
- c) Male students and females are allowed to make as much use of these grounds as possible. Ideally, the grounds should be regularly available weather permitting, to be used to their optimum limit for students to enjoy physical outdoor activities, so improving mental wellbeing and potentially lowering claustrophobic tension in the wings. (para 1.8)
- d) The essential indicated painting and cleaning remedial work in Beech and Cedar is undertaken. (para 1.12)
- e) During warm weather periods the possibility of providing battery operated fans and or, flasks of ice cold water for use in cells overnight. (para 1.14)

ACCOMMODATION – Females

- a) A stand-alone, purpose built women's prison should proceed as a matter of urgency. (para 1.15)
- b) The level and quality of ventilation should be kept under close review to ensure that it is of an acceptable standard. (para 1.16)
- c) The quality and level of maintenance of the communal bathrooms should be reviewed to enable work programme to be commenced. (para 1.17)
- d) Use of the ground floor facilities by female students of Ash House should be maximized. (para 1.18)
- e) Use of the newly constructed Murray House should be maximized taking into account risk assessments relating to individual females. (para 1.19)

2. ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

No recommendations.

3. CATERING AND KITCHENS

- a) Healthy eating is promoted and encouraged throughout HBW. (para 3.1)
- b) An industrial dishwasher is purchased for use in the kitchen. (para 3.5)

4. CHAPLAINCY

No recommendations.

5. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- a) An agreement is reached with BMC to ensure that replacement lecturers are available to cover for BMC staff sickness. (para 5.2)

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

No recommendations.

7. HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- a) Steps are taken to make nursing in the prison environment more attractive to aid staff retention. (para 7.2)
- b) A purpose built Healthcare Unit for both male and females is commissioned and provided. (para 7.6)

8. LIBRARY

No recommendations.

9. RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

Males

- a) All induction staff receive up-to-date training on a regular basis, to enable them to recognise any mental health concerns. (para 9.4)

Females

- a) Staffing pressures should not be permitted at any time to impact on the structured reception process for female students. (para 9.5)
- b) Induction staff should be available in sufficient numbers and equipped with appropriate training especially in mental health issues to deliver the induction process to female students. (para 9.6)

10. RESETTLEMENT

- a) The reintroduction of the Personal Officer Scheme. (para 10.3)
- b) Extra Probation Staff are employed urgently. (para 10.3)

11. SAFER CUSTODY

- a) Where possible, lockdowns are kept to a minimum. (para 11.2)
- b) That the Safety and Support officer is retained in this post. (para 11.6)
- c) The Board welcomes that such an undertaking as Restorative Practice Initiative is pursued as a contribution to such individuals having the consequences of their actions/ reactions explained to them in a rational manner. (para 11.10)
- d) The possible introduction of a Listener/Peer support scheme is considered, with assistance from another agency such as the Samaritans. (para 11.11)

12. SEGREGATION - CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

- a) Minor incidents/issues are settled on the landings (minor reporting). (para 12.1)
- b) When fully justified there should be fewer awards of confined to room/cellular confinement; loss of certain privileges only should be considered. (para 12.4)

13. SPORT AND RECREATION

No recommendations.

14. TUCK SHOP

No recommendations.

15. VISITS

- a) Staff attempt to ensure that students arrive at the Visitors Centre at the required time. (para 15.3)
- b) Modern fit for purpose new fixed table and chairs are installed in the visitors centre area. (para 15.4)

Section 1 – ACCOMMODATION

Young Offenders Centre (Male)

At the outset, it should be noted that during the course of this reporting period and following on from last year, capital work is on-going at HBW to lessen the former "security" emphasis of previous years and to make the overall physical environment less austere and more welcoming. This was a recommendation of the Prison Review Team (PRT) in 2011 which formed part of the process to devolve policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly. It was tasked with reviewing the conditions of detention, management and oversight of all prisons.

1.1 This was shown over the course of this reporting period with the refurbishment of the front entrance into HBW being completed. The entrance area is now much enlarged and modern in design compared to the previous one. The result is that the decor is brighter and more contemporary, with a more spacious reception desk which facilitates easier interaction with staff and visitors. The Board believes this creates a more favourable atmosphere in which to deal with visitors to HBW compared to the former entrance which was much smaller and austere in appearance.

1.2 In addition, at present, work is on-going to re-paint the walls and ceilings and replace the flooring of the main arterial link corridor in the centre (known as the "M1") and security bars are being progressively removed from the windows along this corridor leading, as it does, from the kitchens at one end to the gym and chapel at the other. Security bars are also being removed from the inside of the chapel windows. This is mentioned due to the fact this link corridor is often utilised by students and females alike whether going to appointments in the administrative side of the complex, to use the laundry facilities or indeed en route to adjudications at the nearby CSU. The result is that this area when completed should have a more modern feel to it with the gradual replacement of dated decor and a less oppressive environment for the students. This work to modernize is welcomed by the Board.

1.3 The current male population, as of the 15 March 2016 was 99 students with a maximum capacity in the region of 235. In March 2014 the population stood at 164, and

last March 2015 it was 120. This shows a clear reduction in the number of young males at HBW. This could be due to a number of factors. For example there has been a similar reduction in PSNI custody suites over this same period. Specifically regarding the lower numbers in custody, several explanations have been offered. There is the "legacy" of the recently concluded legal aid dispute with a backlog of cases still awaiting an outcome; an increase in the use of bail by the courts and latterly (a pilot scheme from 1 October 2015) the introduction of an Enhanced Combination Order. This is an enhanced community disposal developed to reduce the number of short term prison sentences. This decrease in population is acknowledged by the Board as an opportunity for certain areas of the male accommodation to be upgraded.

1.4 The design of the individual cells themselves within the male estate (reconstituted as a Secure College from April 2015) is of the standard Home Office type and as such provides as functional an environment as possible in the circumstances. All cells have in cell sanitation facilities. There are 4 residential blocks potentially utilised by the young males, namely the stand alone facilities of Beech House which has four landings of an average 16 operative cells at any one time including an observation cell and a double cell. Cedar House has four landings of an average 16 operative cells including an observation cell and a double cell. In addition, it has a landing with 10 cells. Elm which has four landings and Willow which has three wings, again an average of 16 operative cells. At the conclusion of last year's reporting period refurbishment work was being completed to Elm and Willow houses which included freshly painted cells and landings and upgrading of the in cell sanitation.

1.5 Since this work was undertaken the committal / induction wing has moved from Elm to Cedar, with the result that Elm and Willow are now closed. Cedar 1 at present houses students exhibiting behaviour of being socially or academically challenged and who do not cope well in general population. It can accommodate 16 students at maximum but preferably around 9 or 10 at any one time. Typically those there experience a range of issues, however, the commonality tends to be diagnosis or strong traits of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and there are a range of programmes currently being explored to support these students within the confines of this wing. The Board is impressed with the facilities in place in this wing to undertake such a programme. Some of the facilities in this accommodation include a mood room which is designed and intended to calm a person down, a sound proofed music room is

understood to be planned. In addition, there is a small gym; a small handicraft room is planned as indeed is a computer suite and there is a small kitchen in situ with an ingredients store also being considered. The ethos behind this accommodation is to give those students a break from the general population with the ultimate aim of reintegrating them back into the general population.

1.6 At the end of this reporting period, the Board was made aware that the current accommodation at Willow will close and those students moved either to a wing in Beech or more likely to Cedar. The Board is most concerned that although the programme was experimental with a degree of trial and error much good work already undertaken and could be affected by this move. The reason given for this is higher than average staffing and facilities requirements, set against an overall NIPS budgetary reduction. It is important to note that it is intended as far as the Board is aware that such students will continue to use the in house facilities of Willow and indeed it is intended that those facilities could also be used by those in Cedar 2 students (the vulnerable wing for young males). The Board, on the one hand, welcomes this expansion of the use of these excellent facilities to other suitable students.

Recommendation: That every effort is made to ensure that these facilities currently in Willow 1 are retained and fully utilised.

1.7 The Board understands that as in all public sector bodies, the NIPS will undergo budget cuts over the next reporting period (2016-17) so impacting on such areas as staffing levels and the continuation of the "mothballing" of Elm and Willow to contain costs and the increased "centralisation" of accommodation within the young males estate. Similarly, if the young male population begins to rise again then HBW could be faced with a scenario of there being accommodation pressures to the existing provision. Without pre-empting future events and estimating future admissions to HBW, the Board is concerned there may be an operational requirement for doubling up in cells.

Recommendation: That wherever possible such actions as doubling up in cells should be used sparingly and used only on a case by case basis.

1.8 The semi-rural location of the grounds is very attractive and well maintained and the Board again commends both staff and inmates alike in undertaking this. The lawns

are always immaculately cut and the flower beds situated around the grounds show signs of constant care. Over the reporting period the Board members are aware of additional garden features and paths having been created so enhancing the environment of HBW, to make use of the pleasant environment and taking into consideration manning levels and other operational requirements.

Recommendation: That male students and females are allowed to make as much use of these grounds as possible. Ideally, the grounds should be regularly available weather permitting, to be used to their optimum limit for students to enjoy physical outdoor activities, so improving mental wellbeing and potentially lowering claustrophobic tension in the wings.

1.9 The front entrance foyers of Beech and Cedar are mainly kept very clean. A newer innovation at these entrances is to cover over the metal grill covering the servery lift to the two upper levels; with a hinged cover/door the same colour has the nearby walls, again to lessen the "security" emphasis of previously. The communal areas of the wings in Beech and Cedar are again generally kept clean. Students are often seen using cleaning apparatus at these locations, which is noted and welcomed by the Board. Association rooms for recreational purposes typically comprise a small kitchen / servery area, a small multi-gym with basic exercise equipment, a pool table and a wall mounted TV and these facilities are considered basic.

1.10 Earlier in the year members reported concerns about the cleanliness of Beech House with food waste lying about in the association rooms and servery and accumulating bags of rubbish not being disposed of. The Board is glad to report that matters have been addressed that the general cleanliness of these areas has improved. Essentially it concerned the fact that there was a shortage of those engaged in orderly duties due to attendance at work and education classes under the new College ethos.

1.11 During March 2016 Beech House was being repainted to include the doors and window panes of the association rooms. This was a light grey colour to replace the former dark brown coloured doors and frames and the result is that the area appears brighter, modern and pleasing to the eye. This simple undertaking to improve the wing environment is welcomed by the Board.

1.12 Overall the shower and bathroom facilities appeared clean and adequate in Beech and Cedar. However, in Beech there is evidence of graffiti on shower cubicles and there are rusted metal ventilation grills. Furthermore, some of these areas have and some do not have yellow painted lines indicating a trip hazard on the different levels of flooring. In Cedar some of the shower areas have badly peeling paint from the ceiling.

Recommendation: That the essential indicated painting and cleaning remedial work in Beech and Cedar is undertaken.

1.13 Another issue which members have encountered is the subject of the cleanliness of recently vacated cells. Students have approached members to complain about the smells and smell of cigarette smoke in particular in cells in which they have been allocated. Whilst the Board understands that there are no plans being considered to stop smokers from smoking in their cells, the Board would welcome a proactive local solution to reduce complaints by the utilisation of air fresheners or students on orderly duties being detailed to assist prior to a "new" arrival.

1.14 Again, a recurrent issue specifically in the warmer months is the problem of sufficient ventilation in the cells. The result is that the cells are very stuffy, warm and uncomfortable at night which can result in a lack of sleep and dehydration, and the resulting short temper and irritability of individuals is often carried over into the next day. Whilst not offering any obvious solutions as such, the Board hopes that local remedial action is undertaken. For example, simple solutions are encouraged such as a supply of small battery operated fans from the tuck shop or flasks of ice cold water for use in the cells overnight.

Recommendation: That during warm weather periods the possibility of providing battery operated fans and or, flasks of ice cold water for use in cells overnight.

Ash House Female Accommodation

1.15 The Board note again that plans remain in place for the construction of a stand-alone prison for women. The Board remain firmly of the view that this development

should proceed as a matter of urgency. In the interim, every effort should be made to eradicate deficiencies within the female accommodation especially on landings Ash 1 to 4. The lapse of time between first proposal of this initiative and the present day is unacceptable. The delay is detrimental to the provision of resources to tackle issues particular to woman within prisons e.g. healthcare and family matters as well as other issues of addiction, education and successful re-settlement.

Recommendation: A stand-alone, purpose built women's prison should proceed as a matter of urgency.

1.16 The Board note again that the level of ventilation remains an issue within the female accommodation. Due to staffing issues lock-downs are still common especially at week-ends, resulting in females confined to cells with limited ventilation for unacceptable periods.

Recommendation: The level and quality of ventilation should be kept under close review to ensure that it is of an acceptable standard.

1.17 The Board note that there is now a requirement to re-furbish shower facilities within Ash. It is understood that a rolling programme is under way commencing with the male accommodation. This process should be expedited to include Ash. In addition, there remains the risk of trips and falls within some of the shower facilities due to different flooring levels not currently highlighted.

Recommendation: The quality and level of maintenance of the communal bathrooms should be reviewed to enable work programme to be commenced.

1.18 The Board welcomed the refurbishment work completed within the ground floor of Ash in 2014. The area is welcoming, cheerful and useful where skills and education may be enhanced. But early in 2016 due to a staff illness and no replacement available, the hairdressing facility was under-utilized much to the disappointment of many female students.

Recommendation: Use of the ground floor facilities by female students of Ash House should be maximized.

1.19 The Board is delighted with the newly built 'step-down' house, Murray House, for six students, within the grounds of HBW. Every effort should be made by the HBW management team to ensure that there are clear transparent guidelines/ criteria for transfer of females to this facility and to ensure full utilization.

Recommendation: Use of the newly constructed Murray House should be maximized taking into account risk assessments relating to individual females.

Section 2 – ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

2.1 Substance abuse is a key factor when crime is committed and sadly continues to be a problem during a prisoner's incarceration. A Drugs Strategy Committee has been formed in HBW and the key work is carried out in Willow, with the key objectives being as follow:

- Substance misuse

- Mental health issues

- Suicide identification

- Self-harm tendencies

- Bullying

- Poor coping strategies

- Medical conditions such as Autism etc.

2.2 The approach focuses on delivering support/programmes with the aim to encourage educational attainment, for those struggling to engage, by reducing offending and drug seeking behaviours by tackling and addressing problematic substance misuse.

2.3 The programmes are delivered to students located in Willow (with its own dedicated facilities). In addition to the delivery of programmes by Action Mental Health and Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC); Start 360 deliver group work consisting of a number of options to ensure interventions remain student led, taking into account learning styles/abilities and interests. Modules from the building skills for recovery programme (BSR) are included within this group work that help to address issues such as substance and alcohol misuse, offending behaviour and negative lifestyle choices.

2.4 The vocational skill qualification Start 360 deliver is designed to provide students with an introduction to skills and knowledge required for working in a range of sectors, giving students the opportunity to gain valuable generic skills for work etc. and enable them to progress in a range of vocational qualifications.

2.5 There are acupuncture/relaxation sessions which take place in the designed quiet room and it is this environment that students are introduced to the importance of mood management. The relaxation techniques are a useful way of the students coping with stressful situations or managing difficult thoughts and feelings.

2.6 The Board commends the work being undertaken at all HBW staff levels to reduce the availability of drugs, legal highs and other substances.

Section 3 - CATERING AND KITCHENS

3.1 HBW catering team continues to supply varied meals to the student population, and promotes healthy eating options, offering three choices for lunch and tea with a vegetarian option included. This menu selection is based on a budget of £19 per week per student.

Recommendation: Healthy eating is promoted and encouraged throughout HBW.

3.2 HBW catering team have not put any student through their NVQ, Level 1 in Food Preparation due to the unfortunate situation that there is no awarding body in place. Hopefully, as this report is being compiled an external Verifier is visiting Magilligan Prison to register all assessors within the NIPS.

3.3 The Board is pleased to note that on average there are five students from Ash House per day working in the kitchen on a variety of tasks.

3.4 Catering staff are an essential part of the team to staff the “Cabin,” which is a step forward from the past “Sip & Go” coffee house. The Cabin is staffed by male students under the supervision of a catering officer and the Cabin provides the venue for many functions and meetings. The Board commends the establishment of the Cabin, although it notes that one catering officer is seconded to the Cabin, hence essential staffing levels in the kitchen are reduced.

3.5 As was recommended in the previous year’s report the catering staff have approached the IMB and catering senior officer regards the purchase of an industrial dishwasher for the kitchen; as at present all pots, pans, dishes etc., are washed manually. The Board asks that this request be granted as it would save time and effort, in addition, the dishes would be washed at a higher temperature which would be more beneficial for Health and Safety reasons.

Recommendation: That an industrial dishwasher is purchased for use in the kitchen.

Section 4 – CHAPLAINCY

4.1 The prison Chaplains continue to enjoy a positive relationship with staff and students alike. They are involved in all aspects of prison life and provide spiritual help and support in any way possible. Although the team is made up of a number of Christian denominations, when needed, they call on representatives of any other faith to meet the spiritual needs of students of other religions. The Board commends the Chaplains for the vital role they play in ministering to students and the commitment they give to all those detained in HBW. The assistance they give them in coping with their confinement is paramount.

4.2 It is commendable that Chaplains continue to give assistance to students with the transition from imprisonment to becoming resettled in the community. This helps to

enhance the family and community ties which the student will become involved and the area in which they will hopefully resettle.

Section 5 – EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 The Board notes that Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) is now an established feature and is responsible for education and training at the Learning and Skills centre. There are a number of courses available including Literacy, Numeracy, IT, Art, Catering, Music, Pottery and the associated trade skills, woodwork, brick work and decorating. The emphasis is to ensure that all students attend the classes which they are programmed, with the objective, over the past year, to achieve empty landings. It has been noted that the majority of students will attend the classes that they are programmed for, however, a few will not co-operate and will choose to stay on their landing and normally be confined to their cell.

5.2 The Board is concerned that when a BMC lecturer is sick, and despite the best efforts of the class co-ordinator, students cannot be allocated to an alternative class, hence the students remain on the landing. If an alternative class is found it may or may not be suitable for the student. Furthermore, the Board was of the opinion that BMC would provide a replacement lecturer in the event that the nominated lecturer was unable to attend and take the class. There appears to be an issue and hopefully this will be resolved in the near future.

Recommendation: That an agreement is reached with BMC to ensure that replacement lecturers are available to cover for BMC staff sickness.

5.3 The catering class is well attended by the students, males and females. The BMC catering lecturer displays an enthusiasm for the subject and this proactive approach is appreciated by the students, who take a keen interest in the subject and are always willing to participate.

5.4 In the Board's view the importance of education cannot be underestimated. Time spent constructively away from the landings can only be beneficial to students, staff,

discipline and morale. With the emphasis now on BMC for education and training, the Board looks forward to the publication of results and qualifications gained in all areas.

Section 6 - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

6.1 HBW has an Equality and Diversity policy which requires that all students are treated equally. HBW prides itself in equality and opportunity and preventing and eliminating discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependents, race and sexual orientation. This policy sets out what is required to do by law under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. Section 75 means that HBW has to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial groups, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- Men and women generally;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Persons with dependents and persons without.

6.2 The Equality and Diversity Action Plan is overseen by the Equality and Diversity Committee (E&DC), which meets on a monthly basis and is chaired by the Governor. This meeting has representatives from most departments in HBW. There are also student representatives who attend e.g. Irish Travellers, Foreign National Prisoners (FNP's), young male and female prisoners who inform the E&DC of any issues relating to events on their landings. This gives the students an ideal opportunity to ensure that the senior staff are made fully aware of all issues relating to equality and diversity guidelines. This Committee is attended by a member of the IMB HBW and a representative from the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI). The main policy is to help staff / students and various other people in situ at HBW, comply with the law and follow the same guidance to make certain equal treatment and opportunities are afforded to all, regardless of differences. This promotes and values different cultures and backgrounds. This policy also applies to NIPS staff and service providers alike.

6.3 Student representatives are comfortable with relaying messages from their respective landings from prisoners to this E&DC. Any problems raised are examined and resolved in the best possible way. It is seen as a gateway for students and their views

are treated with respect and confidentiality which is required by the E&DC.

6.4 The Board commends HBW for its positive approach to all issues related to equality and diversity.

Section 7 - HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

7.1 Over the last four years, the day to day running of health provision within the prisons has been the responsibility of the Trust, and during this period the Board has paid careful attention as to how this has worked. There has been an undoubted improvement of working relationships at a senior level, due to the formation of the Prison Healthcare Operational Forum, and the relationship at landing level has continued to improve.

7.2. The Trust provides a range of healthcare services, of which primary care services are the most prominent. It is recognised that providing a healthcare service is a complex task and the utilisation of all available resources are monitored and reviewed. However, the service operates on an emergency or crisis referral basis, and for most of the year it is the Board's opinion that staffing levels were at times limited, which has been acknowledged by the Trust. This was due to resignations, staff sickness and other factors which often did not allow for any proactive work, such as health improvement initiatives to be undertaken. Gradually the posts were strengthened but with others resigning, the healthcare staff still found it difficult to carry out the full range of services. It is obvious that staff retention is an ongoing problem and the Board is disappointed with the continuous difficulties in maintaining the appropriate nursing staff levels. We have been advised that the Trust will work with the Department of Health to explore the issue of Recruitment and Retention of staff.

Recommendation: The Board once again recommends that steps are taken to make nursing in the prison environment more attractive to aid staff retention.

7.3 In attempting to provide a contribution to safer prisons, a decision was made by the Trust to prioritise supervised swallows; however, this is proving to be a most resource-consuming exercise with the inappropriate placement of healthcare personnel, and impacts on the ability to develop the health initiatives.

7.4 In the past, the largest number of issues raised by prisoners in relation to healthcare, related to medication – the primary issue being the unacceptable length of time taken to access prescribed medication when they are initially committed to prison. It now does appear that positive steps have been taken to ensure that a system is put in place, and the problem has been resolved. The Board notes and welcomes the initiative used to overcome this problem.

7.5 The Board fully supports the principle that medication should only be given when needed, and that dependency or the phenomenon of hoarding or bullying other inmates to use or trade their medication, is quite rightly being addressed by healthcare staff.

7.6 Having a mental health nurse is vital for HBW, for with the number of students, both male and female, having mental health problems more investment is required to address the problem. The Board remains convinced that prison is not appropriate for certain students, particularly those who display persistent and severe mental health issues. The Board are well aware that there is a provision to transfer students with acute mental illness to external hospitals if the needs of the student cannot be met in the establishment. Unfortunately, there is often an unacceptable time delay in the student transferring to such a unit. The absence of specific facilities for students with serious personality disorders are not embraced by the Mental Health Act, which leaves the courts with no alternative but to lock them in a prison, manned by prison staff who have not been trained and are therefore not qualified to look after them.

Recommendation: The Board once again recommends that a purpose built Healthcare Unit for both male and females is commissioned and provided.

Section 8 – LIBRARY

8.1 As reported last year the Librarian continues to do sterling proactive work. In addition, over the past reporting period two prominent authors have visited the library to provide readings and encourage the students to be positive with regard to reading and the pleasure that can be gained by reading a variety of books, fiction and nonfiction. The Board recognises that many students have low literacy skills and it acknowledges the nature of the challenge faced by the Librarian.

Section 9 - RECEPTION AND INDUCTION (Males)

9.1 The reception area is where the students gain their first impressions of HBW. The reception area itself is spacious and the holding cells are bright, clean and well maintained. Those who are arriving in an establishment for the first time, normally 30 per month, may be nervous or apprehensive and the Board commends the reception staff for the professional manner in which they handle and process new arrivals.

9.2 Induction now takes place in Cedar 1 and students are given information about HBW life, its rules, education, pastoral care, visits, home leave, tuck shop etc. Committal packs from the tuck shop are issued in reception after the student has been processed. These packs are designed to last until students personal cash (SPC) has been credited with funds. Any non-prescription drugs are confiscated at reception.

9.3 With the increasing number of foreign nationals (FN), for whom English is a foreign language they are catered for by various methods, including interpreter and language lines. Any non-prescription drugs are confiscated at reception. The Board acknowledges the extra effort and care that is required by the staff to process any FN.

9.4 As anxiety is a common feature amongst new committals, all induction staff should receive up-to-date training on a regular basis to enable them to recognise signs of issues with new arrivals that may give concern, i.e. mental health awareness and other health related issues.

Recommendation: The Board recommend that all induction staff receive up-to-date training on a regular basis, to enable them to recognise any mental health concerns.

Reception and Induction (Females)

Ash House

9.5 The Board note that the 'purpose built' female reception area is spacious, bright, clean and well maintained. Those arriving at HBW for the first time will inevitably be nervous, apprehensive and perhaps disorientated. Members of staff are especially trained in delivering the reception process. Due to staffing difficulties over the past period, the Board has noted that at times there has appeared to be difficulty in maintaining adequate levels of staff to ensure that the reception process is always completed promptly to the previous high standard.

Recommendation: Staffing pressures should not be permitted at any time to impact on the structured reception process for female students.

9.6 The Board note that there is a clear comprehensive structured process of induction in which female students receive information on all aspects of prison life including that relating to education, work, remedial care, courses and programmes and levels of regime. Due to rationalization of staff over the past period, it would appear that the female induction process is not always delivered promptly and to the previous high standard. Informal feedback from staff in post, suggest that there is a need to train additional staff to deliver the induction process.

Recommendation: Induction staff should be available in sufficient numbers and equipped with appropriate training especially in mental health issues to deliver the induction process to female students.

Section 10 – RESETTLEMENT

10.1 Amongst young offending students the re-offending rate is particularly high. Within HBW there are specialised staff who are trained in these areas, and who are allocated to the job of resettling students. The staff do an excellent job and work with students who have many offending complex issues and also those students convicted of Public Protection Offences (PPO).

10.2 It is a logical assumption, if students have employment to go to at the end of their sentence, there is a lesser chance of them re-offending, and therefore they can hopefully go on to have a crime-free existence. Students who have taken part in re-developing skills can eventually earn the privilege of working outside HBW at various venues. The

work is continuing and being promoted as a realistic aspiration and it may then hopefully prompt students to evaluate their behaviour and attitudes accordingly.

10.3 The Board supports the emphasis on Personal Development and this is now partly happening on the landings. The Board is disappointed that, despite being recommended in previous years, regular meetings between landing staff and students to discuss opportunities for training and skills is not happening to the extent that would be beneficial to the student. The Board also recommends once again, the re-introduction of the Personal Officer Scheme, but to date, this has not happened, due to cutbacks and subsequent shortage of staff to implement this action. The Board is equally disappointed at the reduction of the Probation staff, which subsequently enhances greatly the work load on remaining staff.

Recommendation: The reintroduction of the Personal Officer Scheme.

Recommendation: That extra Probation Staff are employed as a matter of urgency.

Section 11 - SAFER CUSTODY

Firstly, at the outset the Board is aware of countless occasions when the professional actions of HBW staff (often in a quiet and unobtrusive manner) have undoubtedly saved the lives of individuals engaged in a self-harm or suicide attempt. The Board wishes that due credit is recorded to thank those staff members. Secondly, the Board would like to thank those members in the HBW Safety and Support Team who over this past reporting period have been both extremely professional and courteous to the IMB. The Board would like this to be noted.

11.1 The main reason for opening a Supporting Prisoners at Risk (SPAR) booklet can range from a suicide attempt, a self-harm attempt, drugs or alcohol use, to a low mood or unusual behaviour for that person. Explanations as to why there are still relatively high numbers of SPARS being opened on male students given the relatively low population and high attendance at activities is concerning, a fact noted by the Safety and Support Team (SST) at HBW. A reason given for the female student reduction in SPARS is the increase in off landing activities available to them compared to previously.

11.2 The Board notes that the volume of lockdowns is starting to increase again at HBW compared to the last reporting period which impacts on a number of landings being locked down or restricted. This can occur primarily due to staffing issues, for example staff sickness or latterly due to overall reduction in staff numbers due to budgetary constraints and further reductions are envisaged. Depending on the situation and the vulnerability of an individual, lockdowns only increase the sense of isolation and reduce the opportunity to interact with others during association periods or even to make a phone call, so potentially fostering self-harm attempts at one extreme to low mood at the other. Again local wing based solutions are encouraged wherever possible on a case by case basis when this occurs, for example; facilitating a phone call or contact with Healthcare etc. The Board recommends that where possible, the requirement to initiate a lockdown is kept to a minimum and only when all other contingencies have been exhausted.

Recommendation: Where possible, lockdowns are kept to a minimum.

11.3 Each month there is a Safety and Support Steering Group meeting involving a whole range of invited bodies, for example psychology, chaplaincy, probation, healthcare, security. IMB are invited in an "observer" capacity. Essentially the subject matter covers the most recent statistical information covering issues from SPAR audits, bullying reports, substance misuse report and other significant events. The Board is impressed with the extent of statistical information collated by the SST, for example, covering on a month by month basis the number of SPARs opened, on whom, top reason for opening, which wing the SPAR was opened on etc. Latterly this has been augmented by the use of a pictorial analysis format. This demonstrates on an easy to view basis day of week analysis on incidences of self-harm and the opening of SPARs using a Chi-Square Statistical Test. In essence the result is that a forecast can be made estimating the time of day most instances have occurred causing concern, which day of the week this occurs and which month of the year. This is an excellent format and the SST should receive due recognition of their efforts. To those who cannot attend, the minutes and this information is shared for information only purposes and disseminated where appropriate to residential management and staff.

11.4 There are weekly Safety and Support meetings which centre on updates and information sharing on individuals giving cause for concern, and possible remedial action

if appropriate. The IMB can attend in an "observer" capacity also. From the Board's perspective valuable interaction occurs between those in attendance, however, for various staffing reasons it can be poorly attended. Unfortunately, due to staffing constraints Healthcare staff often have difficulty attending both the weekly and monthly meetings, although latterly Mental Health staff, when available, are sharing their valuable insight. The Board understands that there is an issue with sharing the minutes etc. of these meetings with Trust personnel due to the non-secure Trust system.

11.5 The Board understands that it is the intention of the Governor of Safety and Support to move to a system which schedules SPAR review times at 11.00 daily and where partner agencies are unable to attend daily, to offer an opportunity to attend twice weekly and provide specific input thereby improving input and tailoring care plans. This is currently a work in progress, and this initiative is welcomed by the Board.

11.6 With regards to the completion of SPAR booklets themselves by staff, some areas of concern are that there is still the potential for conversational checks (minimum of two per day) to be missed, although daily staff observational checks are much better. Due to the collation of the completed SPAR booklets by staff, again, this situation is a work in progress to improve the quality and regularity of entries. The reality is that a landing officer may be dealing with multiple situations at the one time. The introduction of a Safety and Support officer on a more regular basis throughout the working week is welcomed and will provide greater opportunity to audit SPARs and special accommodation, and to assess the needs of foreign National students, those disclosing a disability and more vulnerable students.

Recommendation: That the Safety and Support officer is retained in this post.

11.7 Linked to this is the current situation that a number of agencies should be responsible for conversational checks and noting moods of students, now that there is an increase in off landing activities specifically with BMC staff. The Board understands that BMC staff have an awareness of the SPAR process but, in addition, it was suggested that an aide memoir for the staff to help them identify bullying behaviour would be a good idea. The Board believes this to be a sound and welcome initiative.

11.8 From a Safer Custody perspective the Board welcomes the fact that included in the training syllabus for new NIPS recruits are a number of topics which can raise awareness of issues they can encounter in any establishment, but specifically at HBW. For example Autism Awareness, Managing Difficult Conversations, SafeTalk (introduction to suicide identification) and Mental Health Awareness (practical knowledge of how to act when presented with someone in distress).

11.9 In March 2015 a new Anti-Bullying policy was introduced at HBW specifically relating to the young males only. Females continue to be managed under the Challenging Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. This was to re-emphasise that bullying in its various forms would not be permitted at HBW, and to this end new updated anti-bullying posters were produced to illustrate and thus ensure that a more uniform approach was adapted throughout HBW. The Board fully supports such a move. However, the Board understands that despite the apparent high incidence of anti-social behaviour and bullying being reported, it is often unfortunately, not being recorded and that anti-bullying procedures are not being implemented as intended. The Board understands that remedial action is being undertaken and a notice to staff will be issued ensuring that staff are fully aware to challenge any student displaying anti-social behaviour and not to ignore it.

11.10 Linked to the above situation the Board is aware of a reinvigorated attempt under one of the Governing staff at HBW to begin a Restorative Practice initiative and to increase the number of staff trained and involved in it.

Recommendation: The Board welcomes that such an undertaking as Restorative Practice Initiative is pursued as a contribution to such individuals having the consequences of their actions/ reactions explained to them in a rational manner.

11.11 There is much academic research suggesting that an effective method for reducing incidents of suicide and self-harm is the implementation of a Listener/Peer Support scheme. As fellow inmates they are often the first to recognise signs of distress and the fact that those in custodial settings confide more readily amongst themselves; this could alleviate any isolation they may feel. Such an initiative has largely stalled at HBW for a while now. The Board understands that a listener scheme for the males had previously been in effect twice in HBW, but failed to become established for a number of

reasons, including: breaches of confidentiality; being used inappropriately, for example to move drugs; lack of call outs and a small group of people to draw from. Regarding the females, again, it was felt that there were insufficient numbers of people to choose from and also there were issues of confidentiality. The Board welcomes the fact that the current Governor in Safety and Support understands the assistance that can be provided by a peer support scheme and continues to research ways to introduce such a scheme within HBW.

Recommendation: That the possible introduction of a Listener/Peer support scheme is considered, with assistance from another agency such as the Samaritans.

11.12 A concern noted by the Samaritans who visit each Tuesday evening was the number of landings locked down or restricted and therefore the issue arose of not being able to see individuals who may have requested contact with them. The Board understands that contact has been made with Duty Managers about lockdowns when Samaritans visit to try to facilitate access to the landings.

Section 12 - SEGREGATION - CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

12.1 The Care and Supervision Unit (CSU) houses a number of categories of male students - those who are detained under Rule 32 who have offended against good order and discipline; those undergoing cellular confinement, those awaiting adjudication; students who have violent tendencies and finally, those who are accommodated there either for their own protection and/or the protection of other students. The Board had hoped that in the future minor offences could be dealt with on the landings as opposed to the CSU. Whilst this is still not happening, the Board continues to see settlement on the landings as the best way forward. This would free up escort staff who escort the students to the CSU. When the escort staff have to leave the landings, and if there is only one staff member in situ, the rest of the students have to be locked. The Board sees this as unacceptable and does nothing to enhance the well-being of the students concerned on the landings.

Recommendation: That minor incidents/issues are settled on the landings (minor reporting).

12.2 Board members critically monitor Rule 32's and the subsequent paperwork to ensure that proper procedures have been followed and that the application of Rule 32 has been reasonable in the prevailing circumstances. The Board have been impressed with the care and respect shown by officers to students removed from association under rule 32. Board members whenever possible, attend Rule 32 case conferences and extensions to Rule 32.

12.3 Many students housed in the CSU have behavioural difficulties and can be quite difficult to manage. The Board considers that the CSU is well managed and they highly commend the staff for their care and patience in dealing with students resident in the CSU, under some very difficult circumstances.

12.4 Adjudications are held in CSU and are regularly monitored. The Board has to satisfy itself that due process is observed. To date, it is our opinion that students are treated very fairly and records are up-to-date. One point of note is that if a student is found guilty of a charge, it can lead to an award of confined to room/cellular confinement, in addition to the loss of certain privileges; the Board considers that in some cases the loss of certain privileges would suffice. The CSU is one area of HBW which it is mandatory for the Board members to visit on a regular basis.

Recommendation: When fully justified there should be fewer awards of confined to room/cellular confinement; loss of certain privileges only should be considered.

Section 13 – SPORT AND RECREATION

13.1 Board members continue to be pleased to note that both male and female students continue to use the gymnasium and its good facilities on a regular basis. The use being made of the outdoor sports and recreation facilities including gardening and care of the animals has helped many students. This re-direction of students' effort to other activities has assisted in relieving tensions on the landings.

13.2 Students are given every encouragement to participate in sport both as an outlet for energy and, if linked to appropriate educational qualifications, as a springboard to

employment in the fast growing leisure sector. The Board notes that sport and recreation at HBW is one area where there are very few complaints.

Section 14 - TUCK SHOP

14.1 The tuck shop continues to be a valuable resource used by all students. It provides a wide range of products and caters for the needs of the male and female students, including foreign national students.

14.2 Face to face shopping was introduced last year and continues to be a successful innovation with each landing being tucked (goods purchased) within the 45 minutes timescale which is allotted to each landing.

14.3 Following the tuck shop student questionnaire/survey, several new product lines have been introduced including the introduction of certain healthy eating products. The tuck shop continues to offer affordable range of goods with the added option of being able to obtain outside purchases. In addition, a contract review with current suppliers took place recently resulting in a price decrease on a variety of goods. This is noted by the Board, who acknowledge the good sound work that is carried out by both staff and students who work in the tuck shop.

Section 15 – VISITS

15.1 The case for maintaining family ties in terms of the support it offers to prisoners reintegrating into society has been well made. The services provided by both prison staff and NIACRO in the Visitors Centre promote these positive links is highly commended by the Board.

15.2 The Board notes that the introduction of a revised programme for visitors, each afternoon, Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday and Sunday, is most welcome and reflects the visitors' noted requirements. Furthermore, on Sundays there is now one visiting period reserved for female students and one period for male students to receive visitors. This further focus on visiting variation is welcomed by the Board.

15.3 The system for booking visits works efficiently and visits are generally well organised, but the Board occasionally hears complaints that students are sometimes late for visits. In the past, this was because of the lack of staff to escort them to the Visitors Centre. The introduction of the unescorted/free flow for the majority of the students has certainly improved the punctuality of students arriving at the required time. There are still times when because of difficulties in house that a student is delayed leaving the house and therefore arrives late. As visits are such an important aspect of life for students, it is crucial that they can take full advantage of the allocated time. When a student does not have a full period visit, it can cause resentment, frustration and aggressive mannerisms towards the staff. Although it is recognised that if there is flexibility in the overall visiting programme at that time and an adjustment can be made to extend the visiting period.

Recommendation: That staff attempt to ensure that students arrive at the Visitors Centre at the required time.

15.4 The Visits area does provide a pleasant environment and visits are conducted in as relaxed manner as is possible in a secure setting. The fixed table and chairs which are sited throughout the Visitors Centre where the students sit with their relatives/friends are outdated. A request was made during the previous two reporting periods for the fixed table and chairs to be replaced by ones of a modern concept design and more user friendly for the visitors and students. The Board are well aware that a more 'relaxed' style of furniture in situ, could lead to noted problems with visitors.

Recommendation: That modern fit for purpose new fixed table and chairs are installed in the visitors centre area.

15.5 The separated female students have the use of the Visitors Centre boardroom for their visits. This arrangement works well and the Board recognises that a delicate and difficult situation is handled in a manner to ensure that harmony is maintained in the Visitors Centre.

15.6 In the past year, a scheme has now been introduced and a specific room has been allocated which enables suitable students, both male and female, to have time with their children on a private visit. The room is well equipped and ideally situated away from

the sight line of the main visitors' room. The Board acknowledges the initiative and hard work that has gone into the scheme to make it a success. In addition, the mobile home (caravan) has been re-instated behind Ash House and is yet another facility for the female students to have a private visit with their children.

15.7 A recent innovation over this reporting period is the use of Skype. This is used in Ash House for the female students and in the Visitors Centre for the male students, with Skype face to face sessions are available at allocated times. The Board welcomes this concept which is beneficial in maintaining family ties and contacts.

**HYDEBANK WOOD COLLEGE
BOARD MEMBERS 2015-16**

			Appointed
1.	Mr Dennis Constable	Chair	18/12/06
2.	Mr Brian Doherty	Vice Chair	29/06/10
3.	Ms Sadie Logan	No change	08/03/05
4.	Mr Clive Smyth	No change	20/05/13
5.	Mrs Ann Adams	No change	10/06/13
6.	Ms Hazel Patton	No change	31/07/13